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Fifteen hours of lecture and demonstration work in therapeutics should be taught after the students have had the afore-mentioned branches of materia medica. It should be divided into psychotherapy, the use of the mind over that of the patient; hydrotherapy, the use of water; electro-therapy, the use of electricity; serum-therapy, the use of serum; radio-therapy, the use of various kinds of rays. This correlates with their work in the psychopathic and neurological wards and their work in orthopedic and X-ray departments.

In conclusion, we allow fifteen hours in posology, thirty hours in pharmacognosy and pharmacology and fifteen hours in therapeutics, having the principles of each branch applied in the ward work or demonstrations. This transforms the pouring and carrying of medicines from an uncertainty to a scientific art. We should appeal to the nurses' intellect and not only to their conscience.

Since materia medica includes all substances used in the cure of the sick; and since nursing is the kind and intelligent care of the helpless and the sick, materia medica is a part of nursing. As a knowledge of its parts must be had to comprehend the whole, so a thorough knowledge of materia medica is necessary to put nursing on the high level on which it needs to be to conserve life.

A GERMAN HOSPITAL TRAIN

By IRMA MERKEL

Bremen, Germany

We love our train as seamen love their boat and the form of our life on board of the train resembles theirs. We may even speak of the battle with wind and weather when we pass from one carriage to another, across the unsheltered platforms, when the storm grips us in such a way that the opening of the doors is every time a struggle. Many pieces of headgear have on such occasions been lost overboard. At one time a male nurse, while crossing, unfortunately suffered a severe fracture of a leg, but otherwise the state of our health is excellent, chiefly due to the great care with which sanitary rules and their execution are being attended to. Here I may add, that only a very limited amount of alcoholic drinks is allowed at the front generally. One of the most important branches of the provisioning service is the one attending to the supply of mineral waters for the army. This is always available in liberal quantities. The hospital trains get the fullest benefit of these arrangements.

We have about 150 hospital trains which are approximately even in equipment and management. Possible changes and improvements are reserved to the physicians in charge and some are, perhaps, fitted out a little richer than others in accordance with the taste of the donor. The administration is of two different kinds. Some of the trains are taken care of by the Red Cross and carry as attendants members of the association for volunteer nursing, although, of course, they are subject to military authority. Others are military hospital trains, the personnel of which, even the physicians, are at work as part of their military obligation. In these trains no female nurses are arranged for. Only at the special request of the donor, a merchant of Bremen, we had been allowed on our train. The trains of the Red Cross have, on the contrary, nearly always four female nurses.

Our train consists of about 40 carriages; 26 for wounded, 1 for bandaging, 1 for the apothecary and the administration, 1 for the kitchen, 2 for the supplies, a refrigerator car in the summer, 2 for hot water supply, and then the necessary carriages for the three physicians and the rest of the attendants, composed of 30 military nurses, 6 subaltern sanitary officers, 4 female nurses, and 1 inspector, who is the housewife of the train, and the personnel for the kitchen and for the running of the train.

Our carriage is particularly cheerful. We sleep, two of us, in small state rooms. Beds, washing facilities, etc., are arranged just as on a boat, possibly because the North German Lloyd has outfitted the train. The other half of the carriage is our living room. It has so far never been without flowers! There we all take our meals and feel quite at home. Every carriage for the wounded has 10 berths, arranged just as in an American sleeping car, but without curtains, which we have only in the carriage for wounded officers, though it is in no other way different from the rest of the cars. The food is identical for everybody. When we sometimes have to take care of over 300 people, the 4 female cooks have a remarkable job to accomplish, even with simple food only, but there is always some special food cooked for those who are very ill. The food is being called for by the individual nurses, one of whom is in charge of each car. Frequently they are, as a precautionary hygienic measure, not allowed to enter the kitchen, but have to receive the food through the door windows. Plates, spoons, etc., are in every carriage in the supply chest and are cleaned in each carriage; the necessary paraphernalia are provided for with the best utilization of space. In the same way every carriage has a definite supply of laundry which may at any time be replenished from the laundry carriage. The most important factor in the equipment of the carriages is, of course, the quality

of the beds and in that respect there is still a competition of the different systems. We may well be content with the beds in our train which are fitted with three types of springs in order to weaken jerks from every direction. Mattresses, woolen covers and pillows are very good, but in spite of that, every one who is wounded seriously, has always been glad when the trip was at an end and when he saw ahead of him a quiet bed in the hospital.

Alas our wounded! It is easy to write about things which are meant to serve them, it is difficult to speak of the wounded themselves, as our feeling at once prompts us to use the strongest expressions. One must have seen them without complaint on the stretchers, with eyes so full of something high and earnest, eyes in which are written experiences that remain beyond the understanding of those who have not been in battle. A holy expression rests on some of those tired drawn faces, such a one as I have seen on the faces of some mothers who have also suffered to the limit of human endurance in order to make possible the existence of another human being. For their daughters, for their wives, for their loved ones, our soldiers have consciously bled. That thought has allowed them to bear their sufferings quietly. Often when we tried to hold back our tears they would help us with a humorous remark. Never before have I known what humor means, only now I understand it, when these brave soldiers have made bearable many situations by a timely joke.

The entraining of the wounded is attended to jointly by the stretcher bearers and by our military nurses. These latter have a very difficult task, as they have to attend to all the wishes of their patients, even during the night, when they have only a long chair at their command. Five times during the day they have to get the meals, which means usually a long trip from the last carriage, often requiring the opening and closing of more than 60 doors. They also have to keep their carriage absolutely clean, wiping it with a damp cloth. The getting of water at the stations is also extra work, which cannot take place at regular hours, as it naturally has to be fitted to the stops at the stations. Sometimes they are too short. So it happened to one of our most diligent nurses, who wanted to take special care, that the train started under his very nose, leaving him behind with his two buckets of water. Only three days later was he able to join us again and he had naturally to stand considerable chaffing. I also remember a March night in Poland so much below zero that at several stations wells were frozen and we were more than delighted when we found, long after midnight, a station where we could get water by slowly pumping it into the buckets, giving us the assurance that we should not have to go without our warm morn-

ing coffee. In the winter time we were soon used to the great difference of temperature between the inside and the outside of the carriages. Only a few colds occurred. We have found it much harder to bear up under the summer heat. Another great difficulty for the attending nurses lies in the prompt transportation of the wounded whom the physicians want to have in the operating and bandaging carriage. They are brought there in their own beds which can be unhooked without difficulty. Even when this transfer takes place at a station, much good will and judgment have to be used in order to accomplish it properly.

The operating and bandaging carriage presents practically a small modern operating room. It has plenty of washing and sterilizing facilities and very good light. Everything is pure white and everything is kept, in spite of the dust of the train, always clear like crystal. In addition to the sterilizing apparatus it has also a ton of disinfectant fluid into which all pieces of laundry which have come in contact with inflamed wounds are thrown at once. The bandages which have been used are burned immediately. For the bandages which have to be made, each department—there are two departments of 100 beds and one of 50—has its own surgical chest, which contains everything necessary, and it also has containers with sterilized bandaging material. Those of the wounded who can walk into the bandaging carriage have special suites at their disposal, but even they have to remain during the rest of their trip in bed, so that they may not obstruct the narrow passage way. All uniforms are kept, during the journey, in the corners of the platforms under a tent arrangement. This too has to be fixed by the military nurses who have to bundle together what belongs to everybody and who have later on to hand it back to the owner. In addition they have to write down the personal data about the inmates of their carriage. We female nurses assist in the operating and bandaging carriage and also attend to those of the patients who are most seriously ill.

The relation between the male and female nurses occasionally assumes the character of the competition between sexes. But then, this is hardly a time to clarify that situation, otherwise I should often have liked to read to them, for instance, some of the things said in the lecture by Privy-Councillor Dr. Meyer-Gerhard on German Women and Modern Problems, which he recently delivered at a suffrage meeting in New York.

Before the wounded are taken from the train to be transported to their homes and to hospitals, the numbers of those who have to be transported lying down or sitting up, of those who are capable of walking or who are destined for ear, eye, or other special hospitals are

chalked on a blackboard on the outside of each carriage. The corresponding numbers with notes are fixed to each berth so that the transportation is accomplished without a hitch.

The train attendants then have new work to do. During these stops there has to be a thorough cleaning of the carriages, which also have to be disinfected; our train carries a special apparatus for disinfection. In all hospital trains there are special toilets which have to be removed at the stopping points. On account of the danger of infection, the soiling of the track has to be avoided. When the train and the attendant have been thoroughly cleaned, then only a few hours' furlough into the city is granted. Our trains are usually kept on the sidings near the railroad workshops. Needless to say, one has in such surroundings often the longing for the life in the home of an ordinary citizen, though the huge machine shops with all the steel monsters have a peculiar beauty and grandeur for thoughtful persons. It has been very pleasant for us, so far, that we had a different stopping place every time; always we were able to get a great deal of pleasure from a new beautiful corner of our Fatherland. When we were in Hamburg on one of our return trips, I saw for the first time the Bismarck Mausoleum decorated with countless wreaths which had been brought there on the 1st of April in memory of his 100th birthday. The same evening, I listened to a wonderful performance of *Tristan and Isolde*, and when I returned that night my heart was glad with the thought of our great brothers.

Hamburg was simply swamped with flowers and vegetables which have formerly been sent to England. We also stopped at Luebeck and Berlin as well as at Schwerin, the home of our Crown Princess, who was just then visiting there with her four sons and her young daughter. From Koenigsburg we made an excursion to several resorts on the Baltic Sea, which reminded me of the warm springs days of the Riviera Levante. In Neubrandenburg, where there is now a very large prisoners' camp for Russian, French, and English officers, I met with the greatest joy another nurse of our association who had just come from Vienna, on furlough for a fortnight. She had been the superintendent of a military hospital for contagious diseases containing 2000 berths. She was quite enthusiastic about the wonderful coöperation between the Austrian war hospitals. Their general superintendent is Agnes Meyer who had sometime ago studied at the Presbyterian Hospital in New York and at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

Still more interesting, naturally, were the experiences which we had in the region of the military operations. We had enough time there to study, to some extent, the country and the people. There is not a great deal of change for us in regard to these places within the war zone, as

our military train is attached to one army corps and has to return to that corps from each homeward trip. Our army corps happened to be in the north of Poland. Lowicz has so far been our most southern place. At that time we were only a few kilometers behind the front and we heard for the first time the thunder of cannons. We could clearly observe how our flying machines were shot at by Russian shrapnels which floated like white clouds quite harmlessly against the sky, slowly dissolving, happily without doing any damage. The street scenes in Poland have been described a thousand times. Endless rows, coming and going, of all kinds of carriages; motor-cars going at high speed, slow moving cannon which nearly submerged in the groundless roads, long columns of munition and supply wagons, now and then speedy dispatch riders, hospital cars with the Red Cross—but all of it covered with that grey dirt which seems to be the most characteristic feature of Polish country roads. Our soldiers looked weatherbeaten, disciplined, erect in mind and body, giving the impression of thorough order and serious work. Many colored tones were brought into this even grey picture by the dresses of the natives, mostly Polish Jews, the type of which Bremen people know so well through the emigrants. Abashed, and even downcast, they often stood in the low doors of their dirty houses and in the dark court entrances. If we talked with any of them, they all, practically, could speak German, we always heard the same. In a low and stunted voice they would tell of the Russian frightfulness which they had to suffer before and during the war; even from their synagogues they had been torn to severe cruelties and often death. The German domination would be welcome to them, so they assured us again and again. Or did these oppressed people merely wish to please the ear of the victor?

Poland has shown itself as a very beautiful country in the government of Suwalki. Our train was stationed just outside of the city which enabled us to wander without effort quite far into the surrounding country. These wide plains, traversed by gentle chains of hills, have an atmosphere of a very transparent clearness, full of peculiar reflexes of light which bring up reminiscences of the African desert. All silhouettes are drawn wonderfully sharp against the horizon, every plowing farmer on the curiously yellow knolls appears almost within reach. We saw several deep blue lakes where fishing went on peacefully, and had we not been disturbed by a German cavalry patrol which suddenly approached us at top speed and asked us if we had seen any Cossacks, we should have liked to go nearer towards the woods lying right in front of us, but we denied ourselves the acquaintance with the Cossacks and went hurriedly back to our train. The city of Suwalki is as

ugly as all these provincial towns. The streets are slowly being brought into good order by German *landwehr* troops and Russian prisoners who are instructed by gesture. On the railroad, hundreds of Russians are busily making the tracks narrower in order to meet the requirements of our railroad carriages. On one of these tracks I had the chance of seeing a Russian hospital train, unfortunately unequipped, so that it was not possible to form a judgment on its quality. At any rate the berths were crowded into a much narrower space than with us. The latest Russian hospital trains are said to be equipped very finely indeed, for instance, the one which has been donated by the Empress. Unfortunately for the Russians, it was at once captured by the Germans. The Russian nurses whom we met in the Russian hospital in Suwalki, correspond in their appearance entirely with the excellent report that we had heard about them. They seem to be largely recruited from the ladies of the Russian aristocracy. They wore charming veils and under their white coat they showed very smartly shod feet. They appeared to be assisting the nuns in the operating room with a great deal of seriousness. About 130 German hospitals are said to be in Suwalki.

We happened to see the opening of the first German shop intended for the soldiers. The eagerness is indescribable with which they tried to take advantage of this opportunity. In several long lines they would wait patiently and quietly until finally their turn came. In spite of all the packages from home there are usually a few necessities which are lacking and a few wishes that have not been filled. The hospital trains, whenever they leave the home country, equip themselves as fully as possible with gifts for the soldiers and it is the purest joy which we have experienced on our trips when we have been able to give these presents to the soldiers whom we met, either along the tracks or at the stations. We have often wished that those who donated these gifts could be able to experience themselves this pleasure.

But after all these are only small incidental experiences. The war in its grave and sad seriousness seems to be destined to go on for some time. The overwhelming conflagration does not appear to have been extinguished anywhere. And what will the future bring? May not we women all be in accord with these words of Privy Councillor Meyer-Gerhard uttered at the close of his above mentioned address: "The possibility, that this big war could start, is a clear proof that men alone have not been able to establish mutual understanding between the nations to such an extent as to prevent a life and death struggle. I hope that the influence of the women of all the great nations will, in times of peace, establish feelings of better comradeship and understanding."